Having thus described the preferred embodiments, the invention is now claimed to be:

1. 1.   A user interface method for executing one or more operations in a

2. computer for interfacing an associated user with a knowledge portal that is operatively

3. associated with a plurality of data objects, the user interface method comprising the steps

4. of:

5.   receiving a user input;

6.   updating, based upon the received user input, at least one of a current object

7. identity, a preview object identity, and a K-map parameter;

8.   updating a K-map conditional upon updating a K-map parameter;

9.   displaying in a document pane at least a portion of the current object;

10.   displaying in a map pane the K-map; and

11.   displaying in a preview pane contents associated with the preview object.

1. 2.   The user interface method as set forth in claim 1, wherein:

2.   the step of updating, based upon the received user input, at least one of a current

3. object identity, a preview object identity, and a K-map parameter includes updating a K-

4. map view selector based upon the received user input; and

5.   the step of displaying in a map pane the K-map includes selectively displaying

6. one of a tree view and a node view of the K-map based upon the setting of the K-map

7. view selector.

1   **3.**   The user interface method as set forth in claim **1**, wherein:

2   the step of updating, based upon the received user input, at least one of a current

3   object identity, a preview object identity, and a K-map parameter includes updating a K-

4   map class selector value based upon the received user input; and

5   the step of updating a K-map conditional upon updating a K-map parameter

6   includes updating the K-map to include objects corresponding to the K-map class selector

7   value.

1   **4.**   The user interface method as set forth in claim **3**, wherein:

2   the step of updating a K-map class selector value includes updating the K-map

3   selector value to correspond to one of a people class, a places class, and a things class

4   based upon the received user input.

1   **5.**   The user interface method as set forth in claim **1**, wherein:

2   the step of updating, based upon the received user input, at least one of a current

3   object identity, a preview object identity, and a K-map parameter includes updating a K-

4   map scope based upon the received user input; and

5   the step of updating a K-map conditional upon updating a K-map parameter

6   includes updating the K-map to include objects within the K-map scope.

6. The user interface method as set forth in claim **1**, wherein:

the step of receiving a user input includes receiving a selection of the current object identity from the user through the K-map pane; and

the step of updating a K-map conditional upon updating a K-map parameter includes updating the K-map to include objects related to the current object.

7. The user interface method as set forth in claim **1**, wherein:

the step of receiving a user input includes receiving a selection of the preview object identity from the user through the K-map pane.

8. The user interface method as set forth in claim **1**, wherein:

the step of receiving a user input includes receiving a text entry through user highlighting of text in the document display pane;

the step of updating, based upon the received user input, at least one of a current object identity, a preview object identity, and a K-map parameter includes updating an object K-map parameter to correspond with the received text entry; and

the step of updating a K-map conditional upon updating a K-map parameter includes updating the K-map to include objects related to the selected text.

9. The user interface method as set forth in claim **1**, further including:

simultaneously displaying the document pane, the map pane, and the preview pane on a single display device.

1   **10.**   An apparatus for executing one or more operations in a computer for

2 interfacing an associated user with a knowledge portal operatively associated with a

3 plurality of data objects, the apparatus comprising:

4   a computer having a data store coupled thereto, wherein the data store stores the

5 plurality of data objects; and

6   one or more computer programs, performed by the computer for:

7   receiving a user input,

8   updating, based upon the received user input, at least one of a

9 current object identity, a preview object identity, and a K-map parameter,

10   updating a K-map conditional upon updating a K-map parameter,

11   displaying in a document pane at least a portion of the current

12 object,

13   displaying in a map pane the K-map, and

14   displaying in a preview pane contents associated with the preview

15 object.

1   **11.**   The apparatus as set forth in claim **10**, wherein:

2   the step of updating, based upon the received user input, at least one of a current

3 object identity, a preview object identity, and a K-map parameter includes updating a K-

4 map view selector based upon the received user input; and

5   the step of displaying in a map pane the K-map includes selectively displaying

6 one of a tree view and a node view of the K-map based upon the setting of the K-map

7 view selector.

1   12.   The apparatus as set forth in claim **10**, wherein:

2   the step of updating, based upon the received user input, at least one of a current

3   object identity, a preview object identity, and a K-map parameter includes updating a K-

4   map class selector value based upon the received user input; and

5   the step of updating a K-map conditional upon updating a K-map parameter

6   includes updating the K-map to include objects corresponding to the K-map class selector

7   value.

1   13.   The apparatus as set forth in claim **12**, wherein:

2   the step of updating a K-map class selector value includes updating the K-map

3   selector value to correspond to one of a people class, a places class, and a things class

4   based upon the received user input.

1   14.   The apparatus as set forth in claim **10**, wherein:

2   the step of updating, based upon the received user input, at least one of a current

3   object identity, a preview object identity, and a K-map parameter includes updating a K-

4   map scope based upon the received user input; and

5   the step of updating a K-map conditional upon updating a K-map parameter

6   includes updating the K-map to include objects within the K-map scope.

1   15.   The apparatus as set forth in claim **10**, wherein:

2   the step of receiving a user input includes receiving a selection of the current

3   object identity from the user through the K-map pane; and

4   the step of updating a K-map conditional upon updating a K-map parameter

5   includes updating the K-map to include objects related to the current object.

1   **16.**   The apparatus as set forth in claim **10**, wherein:

2   the step of receiving a user input includes receiving a selection of the preview

3   object identity from the user through the K-map pane.

1   **17.**   The apparatus as set forth in claim **10**, wherein:

2   the step of receiving a user input includes receiving a text entry supplied through

3   user highlighting of text in the document display pane;

4   the step of updating, based upon the received user input, at least one of a current

5   object identity, a preview object identity, and a K-map parameter includes updating an

6   object K-map parameter to correspond with the received text entry; and

7   the step of updating a K-map conditional upon updating a K-map

8   parameter includes updating the K-map to include objects related to the selected text.

1   **18.**   The apparatus as set forth in claim **10**, further including:

2   simultaneously displaying the document pane, the map pane, and the preview

3   pane on a single display device.

1   **19.**   An article of manufacture comprising a program storage medium readable

2   by a computer and embodying one or more instructions executable by the computer to

3   perform method steps for executing an operation to perform a user interface method for

4   interfacing an associated user with a knowledge portal operatively associated with a

5   plurality of data objects, the method comprising the steps of:

6   receiving a user input;

7   updating, based upon the received user input, at least one of a current object

8   identity, a preview object identity, and a K-map parameter;

9   updating a K-map conditional upon updating a K-map parameter;

10   displaying in a document pane at least a portion of the current object;

11   displaying in a map pane the K-map; and

12   displaying in a preview pane contents associated with the preview object.

1   **20.**   The article of manufacture as set forth in claim **19**, wherein:

2   the step of updating, based upon the received user input, at least one of a current

3   object identity, a preview object identity, and a K-map parameter includes updating a K-

4   map view selector based upon the received user input; and

5   the step of displaying in a map pane the K-map includes selectively displaying

6   one of a tree view and a node view of the K-map based upon the setting of the K-map

7   view selector.

1   **21.**   The article of manufacture as set forth in claim **19**, wherein:

2   the step of updating, based upon the received user input, at least one of a current

3   object identity, a preview object identity, and a K-map parameter includes updating a K-

4   map class selector value based upon the received user input; and

5 the step of updating a K-map conditional upon updating a K-map parameter

6 includes updating the K-map to include objects corresponding to the K-map class selector

7 value.

1 **22.** The article of manufacture as set forth in claim **21**, wherein:

2 the step of updating a K-map class selector value includes updating the K-map

3 selector value to correspond to one of a people class, a places class, and a things class

4 based upon the received user input.

1 **23.** The article of manufacture as set forth in claim **19**, wherein:

2 the step of updating, based upon the received user input, at least one of a current

3 object identity, a preview object identity, and a K-map parameter includes updating a K-

4 map scope based upon the received user input; and

5 the step of updating a K-map conditional upon updating a K-map parameter

6 includes updating the K-map to include objects within the K-map scope.

1 **24.** The article of manufacture as set forth in claim **19**, wherein:

2 the step of receiving a user input includes receiving a selection of the current

3 object identity from the user through the K-map pane; and

4 the step of updating a K-map conditional upon updating a K-map parameter

5 includes updating the K-map to include objects related to the current object.

1 **25.** The article of manufacture as set forth in claim **19**, wherein:

2   the step of receiving a user input includes receiving a selection of the preview

3   object identity from the user through the K-map pane.

1   **26.**   The article of manufacture as set forth in claim **19**, wherein:

2   the step of receiving a user input includes receiving a text entry supplied through

3   user highlighting of text in the document display pane;

4   the step of updating, based upon the received user input, at least one of a current

5   object identity, a preview object identity, and a K-map parameter includes updating an

6   object K-map parameter to correspond with the received text entry; and

7   the step of updating a K-map conditional upon updating a K-map

8   parameter includes updating the K-map to include objects related to the selected text.

1   **27.**   The user interface method as set forth in claim **19**, further including:

2   simultaneously displaying the document pane, the map pane, and the preview

3   pane on a single display device.

1   **28.**   A user interface for interfacing an associated user with a knowledge portal

2   that is operatively associated with a plurality of data objects, the user interface

3   comprising:

4   a means for receiving a user input;

5   a K-map processor for calculating a K-map corresponding to a current object and

6   a set of K-map parameters;

7   a current object display pane for displaying at least a portion of the current object;

8   a K-map display pane for displaying the K-map; and

9   a preview pane for displaying contents corresponding to a preview object.

1   **29.**   The user interface as set forth in claim **28**, wherein:

2   the set of K-map parameters includes a view mode parameter;

3   the K-map display pane displays the K-map in a node view conditional upon the

4   view mode parameter corresponding to a node view; and

5   the K-map display pane displays the K-map in a tree view conditional upon the

6   view mode parameter corresponding to a tree view.

1   **30.**   The user interface as set forth in claim **28**, wherein:

2   the set of K-map parameters includes a class parameter; and

3   the K-map processor calculates a K-map containing objects limited to objects

4   corresponding to the class parameter.

1   **31.**   The user interface as set forth in claim **30**, wherein:

2   the means for receiving a user input include a pointing device selection means

3   operative at least within the K-map display pane; and

4   the class parameter is selectively updateable by the user via the pointing device

5   selection means operating on a graphical class input dialog.

1   **32.**   The user interface as set forth in claim **30**, wherein:

2   the class parameter selectively takes values including a people class value, a

3   places class value, and a things class value.

1   **33.**   The user interface as set forth in claim **28**, wherein:

2   the set of K-map parameters includes a scope parameter; and

3   the K-map processor calculates a K-map containing objects limited to objects

4   whose relationship to the current object falls within the scope parameter value.

1   **34.**   The user interface as set forth in claim **33**, wherein:

2   the means for receiving a user input include a pointing device selection means

3   operative at least within the K-map display pane; and

4   the scope parameter is selectively updateable by the user via the pointing device

5   selection means operating on a graphical scope input dialog.

1   **35.**   The user interface as set forth in claim **34**, wherein the graphical scope

2   input dialog is a slider bar.

1   **36.**   The user interface as set forth in claim **28**, wherein:

2   the means for receiving a user input include a pointing device selection means

3   operative at least within the K-map display pane; and

4   the current object is selectively updateable by the user via the pointing device

5   selection means operating within the K-map display pane.

1 **37.** The user interface as set forth in claim **28**, wherein:

2 the means for receiving a user input include a pointing device selection means

3 operative at least within the K-map display pane; and

4 the preview object is selectively updateable by the user via the pointing device

5 selection means operating within the K-map display pane.

1 **38.** The user interface as set forth in claim **28**, wherein:

2 the set of K-map parameters includes an object parameter, said object parameter

3 being selectively updateable by the user; and

4 the K-map processor calculates a K-map containing objects related to the object

5 corresponding to the object parameter.

1 **39.** The user interface as set forth in claim **38**, wherein:

2 the means for receiving a user input include a pointing device selection means

3 operative at least within the document display pane whereby the user selectively updates

4 the object parameter by selecting text corresponding thereto from the contents of the

5 document display pane.